



BE AWARE & TAKE CARE:  
Talk to your pharmacist!

# Pill Splitting

...not for every person, and not for every pill

Splitting one pill into two pieces can help when a larger pill is hard to swallow, but the most common reason that pills are split is cost. Dividing one higher dose pill into two lower doses can result in less total cost (or fewer co-payments) because some manufacturers price higher dose pills at the same price as lower dose pills.

That doesn't mean all medicine can be split safely. The decision to split or not split a pill should be made after you understand the issues and your medicine, and consult with your health care provider. Ask your prescriber or pharmacist if pill splitting is appropriate for you.

## DO

- Talk to your pharmacist and prescriber about whether your medicine can be safely split
- Use a device designed to split pills; splitters are available from \$3 to \$15
- Remember that air and moisture can affect a split pill, so splitting should occur only one pill at a time
- Take one piece of a split pill at one dosing, and the other piece at the next dosing time
- Split pills only if you are motivated to do so
- Ask your prescriber or pharmacist whether the correct dose is available without splitting a pill

## DON'T

- Don't split pills that crumble
- Don't split pills if you have trouble with dexterity, poor eyesight, poor memory, or a condition that affects your ability to make decisions
- Don't split time-release pills because the premature exposure to stomach fluids may affect the medicine
- Don't split all pills from a prescription at one time because prolonged exposure to air and moisture may change the pills' effectiveness
- Don't split capsules
- Don't split small pills or unusually shaped pills
- Don't split pills with a knife or anything else that can cause an uneven split

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